

# GINGER

## sloppy seconds

Summer 1995

HALLOWEEN JACK!

£1

**HELGA PIG!**

ANGRY RANTINGS!  
**'PUTER PORN**

FOR QUEER  
'N' DYKE  
ADULTS ONLY

and some other stuff!



## FOREWORD

Ah-ah the joys of getting to use a proper grown up computer, on a proper monitor instead of a TV set, and using a proper DTP program and a flash **LASER** printer. I'm spoilt. Though it won't last. Alas.

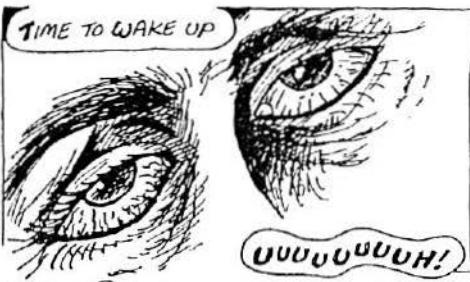
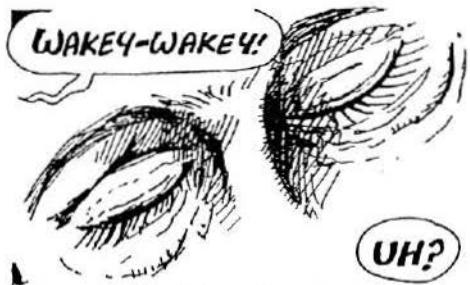
One of the frequently asked questions of **Ginge 1** was whether or not **HELGA** is a real person. And I have to say -even though she isn't going to thank me for it -the answer is yes, Indeedy-doo. Those lucky enough to have been able to afford to go to that mass consumer fest that was "Pride '94" (the Lesbian and Gay seems to have withered away and died these past few years) last year may have noticed the **DIKEA** girls with one of them wearing a rather nifty cardboard horned helmet. That was Helga that was. And here's a photo to prove it. Maybe you even bought one of the

**DIKEA** badges, treasure it -for it was made with her own fair paws.

From this issue on I'm trying to get up a mailing list, if you liked **Ginge 2** and think you might like to have copies of any future issues then bung me a stamped self addressed envelope (-I prefer this because then if I can't read your handwriting I can't be accused of negligence if it gets lost in the post.) Then when I've actually got the next **Ginge** ready I can send you a flier about it, and how much it's going to cost you, and all those other important details, without bankrupting myself in the process.

And if absolutely no one sends in any SAE's then I might have to have a rethink about whether or not it's worth continuing **Ginge** at all. Be warned. It's just that I like to think I'm actually doing this *for* someone -it keeps me motivated.





# HALLOWEEN JACK



## THE MAINSTREAM GAY PRESS REVIEWED

So let's see what we've got here in the happy world of gay mainstream publishing in these, the oh-so liberated nineties.

### GAY TIMES

The old weighty worthy, well kind of, that's the impression it tries to give of itself. **Gay Times** started out as a stable mate to an already well established bunch of British gay porn titles. And incorporated **HIM** which was, (and later became again) a Gay porn title. This meant the mag had it's fair share of nudie boy pin ups -there to help to advertise it's sister porn titles. But in those heady political times, (actually a left over from the seventies, and an adherence to then fashionable feminist (anti-sex) principles) the pin-ups were deemed unsuitable and had to go. They have crept back again mind you, first in the form of those tacky phone line adverts and now as the cover paper for the classified section. Sex being back in fashion, in these so-called Post-feminist times. **Gay Times** based itself on the thick American monthly 'the Advocate', even down to originally using the same cheap (and nasty) newsprint. Though these days in a effort to match the new glossies **Phase** and **Attitude**, it's got itself a square bound spine and better paper with lots more colour. But it's still so boring. So much of it is devoted to advertising, sorry reviewing its own publishing houses' books and videos. With tedious samey uncritical reviews of the same old clubs and pubs with

photos of inanely happy punters smiling into the camera over and over again. Be honest, when have you EVER seen the gay press give any gay pub or club a bad review? Big yawn city. Any interesting articles are few and far between. But it could well stagger on indefinitely, since **Millvres** isn't going to let its biggest showcase fold, and it must bring in enough revenue from its classified sections to be able to carry on for years to come yet.

### PHASE (now deceased)

One of the first new contenders. Very much based on the American glossy **OUT** which hit New York a couple of years back which obviously must have done so well over there that some enterprising souls thought a British clone might do as equally well here. And thus we got **Phase** (and **Attitude**, and **DIVA**) The first issue was very sad, so short of articles it had to use a lot of **EXTRA LARGE TYPE** in order to make its page numbers up. I bought issue two for the Ru Paul interview, and for the bits on Sadie Lee and Dez Jarman and the Sisters, thinking maybe things were picking up. But that proved short lived. It was back to being so boring by the next issue that I really regretted having bought it, the issue after that was even worse so I didn't buy it. (It also proved to be its last issue -surprise surprise -I toyed with the idea of buying it just to complete the set, but on another flick through I still couldn't bring myself to buy it! And for a mag addict like me that's really saying something!) It was notable for being overloaded with page after page of

stupid quasi-soft pornish fashion photos. God I hate fashion shots! And Sad Boys Inc. do 'punk' was a real low spot. Wasn't the **FACE** doing this sort of thing nearly ten years ago? and doing it a lot better. Dizzy queens whose only thoughts are as to what over priced clothes they can waste their money on next can already buy **Vogue**, **GQ** and many other disgusting fashion rags. Unfortunately this too can be said of

#### **ATTITUDE**

Which is slightly better than **Phase** at least and at £3 it had better bloody be. I've bought it because it's had good stuff on Leigh Bowery, John Waters, Klaus Nomi, and even Peter (D:Ream) Cunnah 'fessing up to having enjoyed a boy to boy snog and once waking up to a unexpected blow job. Now that's exactly the stuff I want to hear about celebrities, the **DIRT!** Once gay pop stars come out and others 'fess upto their indiscretions then at least I can pretend we've made it into the Nineties! But then I really could have done without the exclusive interviews with Diana Ross, and Nomi Campbell, their travelogues and their endless inane consumer tests of designer Lager, white Tshirts, denim jackets, razors and other assorted bollocks! Not to mention their uncritical blind love and promotion of all things Clubby. We all know the gay press will never ever say anything nasty about any night spot or club because firstly, they might lose a bit of advertising revenue and secondly, too many of the journos and photographers get let in to these places for free and they

love that. I know, I've done the same thing myself!

**Attitude** has been the one to catch the most flak because it's funded by a straight company. Well I don't know about this utopian notion of a Pink pound funded economy, it's so cloud cuckoo as to be laughable. There isn't much of a rich gay ghetto outside of London anyway. So if a few greedy straights are willing to throw a little money our way it would be churlish to turn it down. After all straight businesses have long been happy enough to take gay money, and I'd rather see money donated by a well meaning straight than by a evil right wing queen any day! It has also meant **Attitude** has kept going for longer than **Phase** managed to. Beside which, isn't it a mite hypocritical to slag it off for not being gay-owned when all the other mags were deliberately courting straight advertisers money!

Unfortunately **Attitude**, aside from the occasional good article, is marred by its fashion plates, its rampant consumerist rantings (Issue 4, had a four page article: 'Men and Shopping'!!!) and blithely glib talk of foreign travel. As a pauper, I really feel I'm getting my nose rubbed in it here. Is there really this huge world of fantastically wealthy pooves out there? If so - where the bloody hell is it? (Old Compton street, Soho, London that's where, nowhere else!) Isn't this the Gay Community settling down to 80's Thatcherist Ideals a bit late in the day? Are they so burnt out by all that politicking and protesting in the

Eighties that now they just want to rest up and shop and need to be told what to buy before spending their evenings in overpriced nightclubs showing off their new designer clothes and taking new designer drugs? Or is there this whole new Gay consumer generation? Or was there a bunch of them who were hiding out all these years just waiting for the right time to emerge? Are there better brainwashing techniques in force? In short, where have they all suddenly come from that there are all these magazines and products and businesses clamouring for their trade?

But I digress, back to the reviews;

#### **The Pink Paper**

Ah yes, another dull but worthy, or would be if it wasn't so shallow. Whereas the new mags cater for the richer right-wing-cum-liberal cum-rampant-consumerist spectrum of the Gay market, this is one for the left-over lefties. Supposedly a national newspaper, except for most of the time its journalists seem a bit hard pressed to leave the security of their Hackney offices or of the Fallen Angel pub just downstairs. So don't expect too much news outside of London. After all the highest density of Pooves in the country is in the republic of Hackney so that's OK. Isn't it? Oh, what can I say? it's been around for ages now, it's boring as anything, it's lazy, it caters for the old slightly crusty trendy lefty social worker-ish types. And it doesn't cost you anything. Which is just as well since so few people would buy it!

#### **BOYZ**

Helga showed a copy of this to a straight friend of hers and he went "Ugh, the Sun!" He was so right, that's exactly what it is, a SUN for Gay bimbos. Loaded with nudey boy Pin ups (there to advertise Prowler Press' porn titles -Millivres rivals in the soft gay porn business), inconsequential fluff that they try to pass off as articles, endless consumer news and until recently at the back, page after page of those stupid 0898 phone line ads which is what pays for the whole thing. Candyfloss pap tailor-made for brain dead vacuous hedonistic disco-bunnies. Bloody E has a lot to answer for.

#### **BONA (Deceased)**

This resembled nothing more than any number of those cheap Women's magazines. It had the Week's TV listings, it had articles on home decor, interviews with London scene queens you won't ever have heard of before unless you live in the very centre, and just couldn't give a fuck about even if you did. It was ghastly. Really nasty. Where were the love stories and the knitting patterns? That's all it had missing.

Gee, I wonder why this only lasted for three issues? The publishers claim they couldn't get enough (presumably straight) advertisers. Golly, how ungrateful of them after all **Bona's** hard work of having so painstakingly removing all the things that make us offensive to the straights -the nudey boy pin-ups, the politicking, the righteous outrage of how badly society treats,

regards and discriminates against us, the sex. All of that taken out, in order to deliver us up as just another targetable consumer group to the big corporations (instead of just to our own, as equally exploitative, Gay businesses). Or could it be no one wanted to actually buy the bloody thing -after all the **Pink** and **Boyz** and **Shebang** are for free and a lot less sanitized!

So from the political Eighties, organising and protesting against discrimination and against the threat of HIV and AIDS it's come to this. We're all now just consumers. Just when the straight population are beginning to wake up to the horrors of consumerism, have started to try and recycle things, are becoming environmentally aware, we've been targeted as the last great consumer group. The dizzy shopping queens have won us our place as a nice hedonistic spendthrift market group to target. Willing to buy any crap they care to advertise at us. It's scary that so many gay men identify

with Patsy and Edina of "Absolutely Fabulous". The problem is that they see the show as an accurate reflection, nay, a celebration of their sybaritic lifestyles instead of the scathing parody that it's meant as!

Do we get what we deserve in all of this? Or is it being foisted upon us? Is this the new gay orthodoxy? Obviously they are NOT catering to our real needs and diverse interests otherwise why would I be publishing this thing, and why are other fags and dykes up and down the country and across the world producing their own Queerzines and comix! The mainstream magazines are only talking to the same small bunch of rich over-privileged cosmopolitan queens, it looks like anybody else who doesn't have money, who doesn't live in the heart of London, or share the same mainstream 'rainbow' tastes been edged out completely.

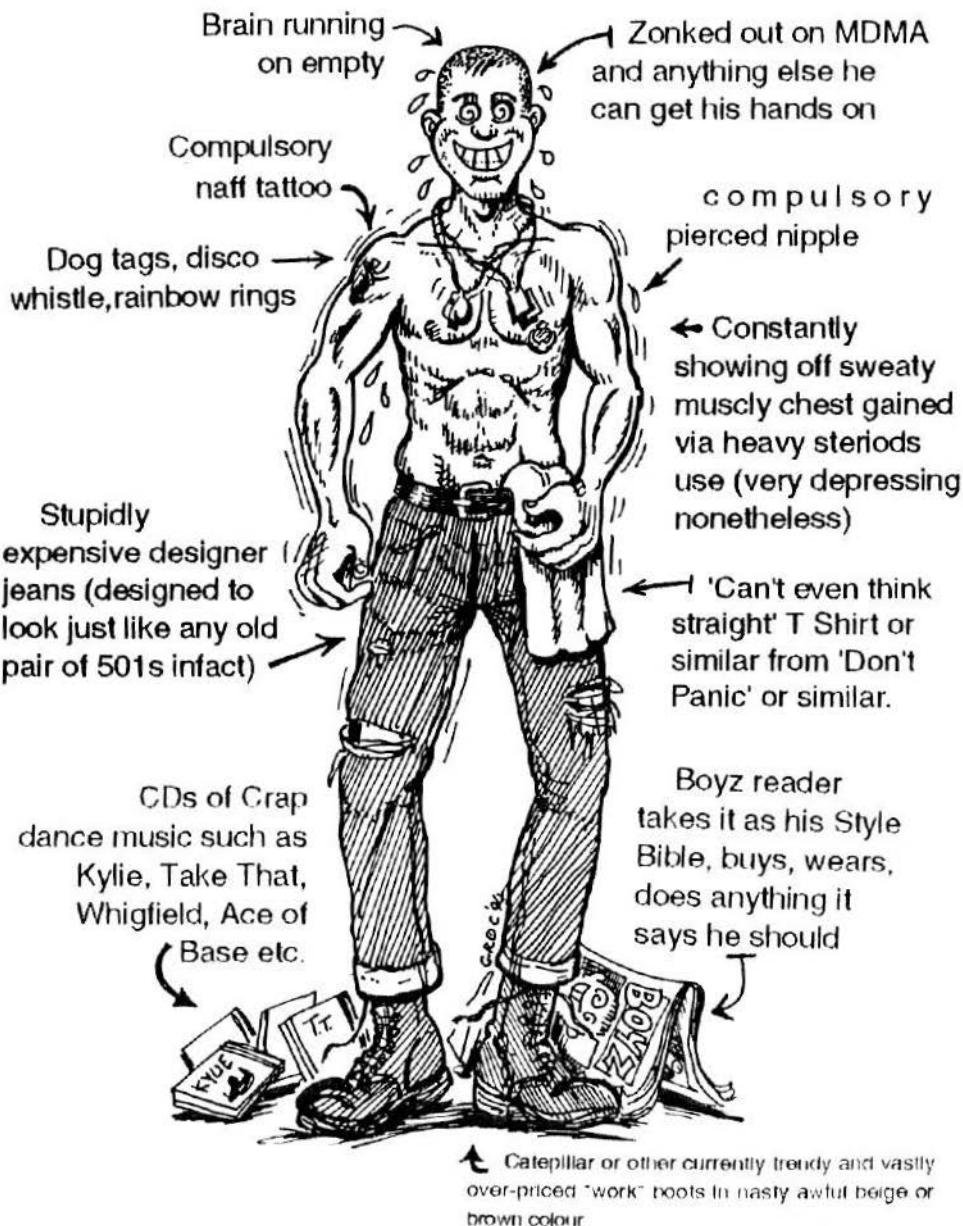
Their message; 'Consume or just fuck off and die!'

**FUCK OFF  
PAUPERS!**



## RIS1BLE GAYS #1

# THE BIMBO CONSUMER QUEEN



# GROSS BIG MISTAKE





HELP! HELP!

IT WAS AT THIS POINT I UNDERSTOOD  
THE PHRASE "ONE DRINK IS TOO  
MANY - A HUNDRED NOT ENOUGH!"

# ANAL HELGA



I'VE JUST DONE A  
REALLY BIG FAT  
LONG ONE THAT  
WON'T FLUSH  
DOWN!

WE DON'T  
WANT TO  
KNOW!

**ANAL  
HELGA**

YOU BE CAREFUL THERE!  
DON'T YOU DARE DISRUPT MY PRECIOUS  
EPHEMERA - ALL THOSE OLD BUS  
TICKETS - SWEETIE WRAPPERS -  
FOOD TIN LABELS - AND  
ESPECIALLY MY BELOVED  
TINNED TOMATOES  
LABELS ARE ALL IN  
ORDER - BY DATE  
AND ALPHABETIZED!



**BAD HELGA!  
NAUGHTY HELGA!  
PUNISH HELGA!**

**OW!  
OW!  
OW!**

**SLAP!**

**WET  
LETTUCE**

**SNORK!  
SNUFFLE!  
UFF!**

**GROO  
98**

## SOCIETY'S LIES

**Gay men and Lesbians should have at least one advantage over the straight population.** In that by the time they've successfully come to terms with their own sexuality (closet cases need not apply) they've come to realise that the whole of society is based on lies, gross assumptions, stupidity (not to mention greed, and self-seeking self interest at the expense of others -but these have all become a lot more exaggerated since the Tories swept into power). It isn't what's wrong with **us** which is the biggest problem but what's wrong with society and how it brings pressure to bear on every individual in order to make them conform and hence be easier to 'process'.

Everything has been geared up around the needs and interests of the (white) heterosexual male. Supposely (traditionally) women are there just to act as mothers and slaves. Of course this all starts to have it's flaws exposed when anything else comes along to question this status quo, whether it's feminism, homosexual folk, different belief systems or whatever.

Homosexuality is always considered to be inferior to heterosexuality but only because the establishment says it is. Why is that? For ages there's been the question of who's 'passive' and who's 'active' (who is 'butch' -plays the role of the man and who is 'fem' -plays the role of the woman) forced onto gay folk. Not because of any sensi-

ble reason, but because it is how the Hets do things, and that's the way hets have always done things and we were expected to live up to it too, by pretending. Pretty dumb. And why? Because to do otherwise might question and put in jeopardy how het society organises itself. God forbid that the so called 'natural' order be upset. Perhaps say, that the woman could go out to work and the man stay at home doing the housework, or that they should share roles. Or that we might question whether or not we should even have to go to work at all!

Society likes to present itself as immutable, that things have been as they are now forever and ever, that that's the way it should be and that things never need to change.

This is of course one of the biggest lies out, infact things have always been **changing**, despite what the likes of Mary Whitehouse and the fundamentalist Tory lot would have you believe. Their '**back to basics**' is a race back to a wholly fictional 1950's vision of how the world should be. Pre sixties and the invention of successful contraception, sexual liberation, feminism, the birth of Gay Lib, and the public being able to see through establishment lies over various wars, the Korean, the Vietnamese etc.

The world was a lot different before the 50s and just as different afterwards. But that's the period they've alighted on as their ideal.

[My mother has a good theory as to why this should be. Which is that you always over ide-

alise the time when you were a child growing up, just at the time when you were most ignorant to the ways of the world and when your parents did everything for you. fed you, clothed you and protected you, a simpler time, a period of genuine innocence. For a lot of our current day politicians -of Margaret Thatcher's age, that was surprise, surprise -the Forties and the Fifties!]

When you're a good white heterosexual **lad** the world is your oyster, simply being male confers you with instant advantages. Most couples want a male child over a girl. From then on in, mother will pick up after you, all your needs are automatically catered for, meals are always on the table, clothes are washed and ironed, go to school and if you can play games you're really blessed. It's all a case of doing what you're told, that's what schools are for. At home you'll be excused homework (no decent parent wants their boy to be a swot! to actually prefer **reading** over going out and playing football, why, that's a **silly** thing!)

Girls have it harder because their role is seen as primarily looking after men the brain-washing starts early and so out comes to toy vacuum cleaners and kitchen sinks and cookers. (Show me the gene that makes women more capable at using a steam iron, or a washing machine or a vacuum cleaner! Funnily enough machines which were all invented by men.)

Schools only have a limited number of simple functions, the first

is to get you into practise for the world of work. To be a good time keeper, be punctual, learn to defer to authority, learn that they have the right to abuse you and that you have to do all the things they tell you to, no matter how dumb and stupid they may be. The rest is to find out what you're good at. Whether you are good with your hands or your brain, hands is easy, since all you need to do is learn how to follow instructions by someone else. Such folk can be let out of school as soon as possible. Brain workers need to be taught how they can use their brains -this takes a lot longer, and whilst it is a lot cushier, a lot of subtle control systems need to be put in place. Mainly because these are the people who could be potentially a lot more dangerous. At no time should anyone be given positions of any kind of power if they have a tendency to question things.

The weirdos and the subversives and creative types are hived off at this point. They're the first ones to start questioning the status quo. And the ones more likely to be able get the message across to the rest of the population.

Politicos are actually less of a threat overall. Because at the end of the day, whichever side of the political spectrum they come from they still uphold the superiority of the heterosexual male. There will only be small shifts in just how the patriarchal power will be welded. With just the politicos (usually male of course) themselves taking over the role of top dog.

Gay folks very existence does question so many of the assumptions that society is based on. Once you realise that -you start to see why establishment figures get so hysterical and irrational over the issues. It's an act of stupidity and blindness on their part, and a flat refusal to question their own beliefs. After all they might end up having to change their lifestyles, wash their own socks, or type their own letters and reports. I.E. do some of the really boring stuff they delegate women to do -for themselves!

Gay folk overturn sexual roles and prove that there are lot **less** differences between the sexes than the establishment want you to believe. So many of the differences are purely cosmetic. Men **can** wash pots, they **can** weld a vacuum cleaner, **can** operate a washing machine etc. these things are not genetically determined. They're just desperately dull and boring which is why men don't want to do them.

Incidentally women can just as easily run companies (whether small or international), repair cars, or whatever.

Yeah, yeah, things are changing thanks to the mismanagement of the Tories and their cronies over the past few years. The working class male of the species is gradually becoming redundant, as most of the new jobs being created are now usually low-paid low grade secretarial jobs which go in the main to women. This isn't because of any feminist revolution.

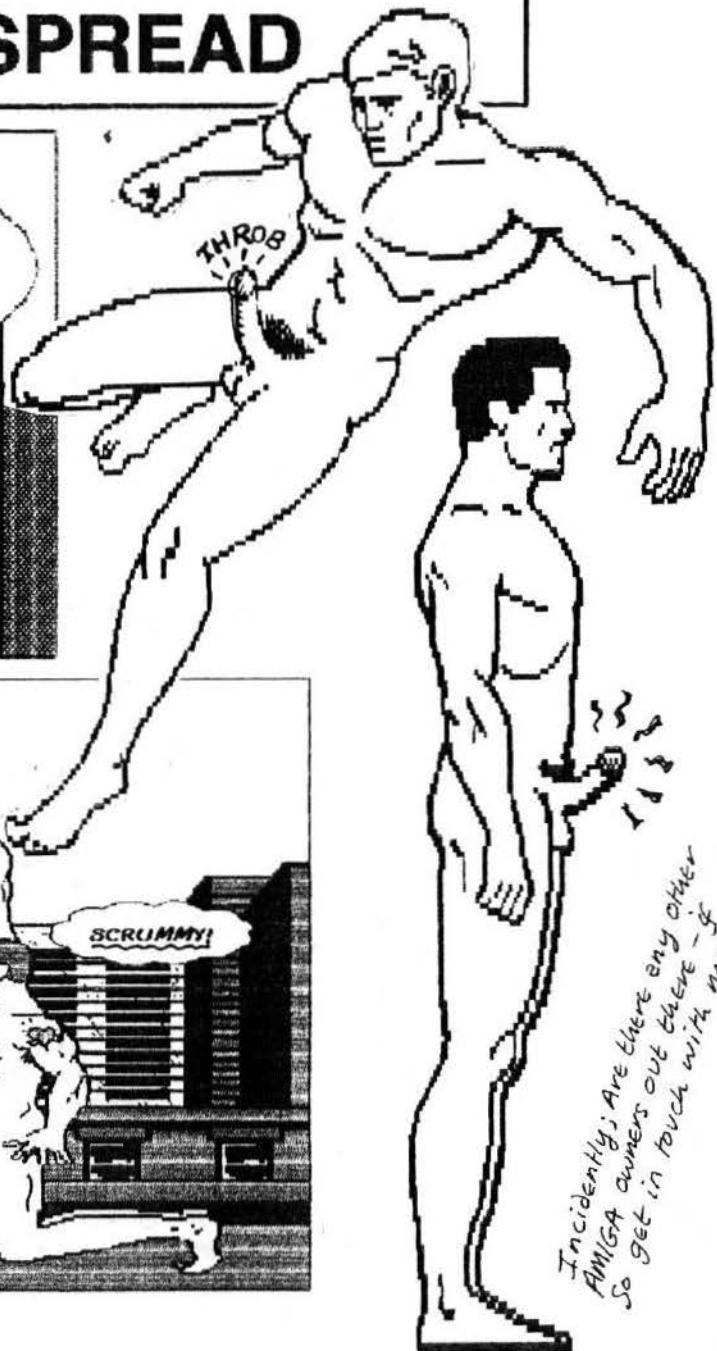
Because you can guarantee that the head of whatever company these women are working for is going to be male. How many rich males are there compared to how many rich women?

No, they hire women simply because they can pay them less. I just wonder how long this can go on, just how much more are women going to take? This is where feminism really should be coming into play. This is where women should be fighting to get the laws changed where they are being abused. For the benefit of themselves and men, they shouldn't be putting up with this.

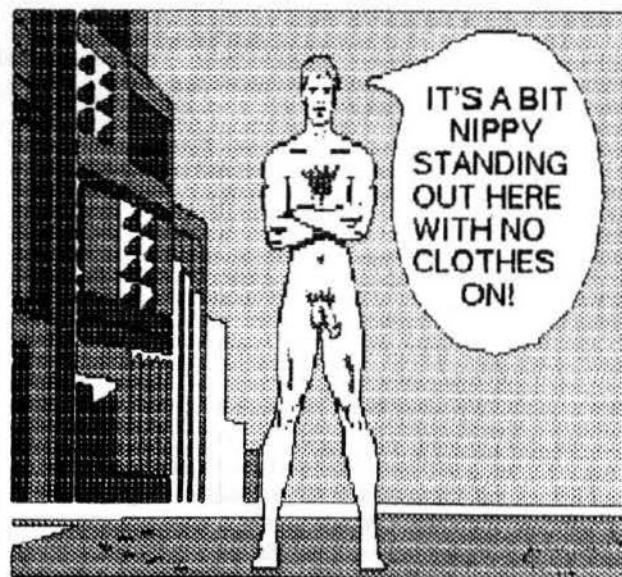
But no one seems to mind what's going on here. I suppose it shows how just how successful the brainwashing has been over the years -that everyone now feels so helpless and unable to change anything. But things are changing constantly -it's just that they aren't being changed for the betterment of the masses but only for the obscenely rich. People who are in the main male. What a surprise that is.

The points I'm trying to make are that gay folk have more in common with feminism, than consumerism, and that society is still too hooked up on maintaining outdated gender roles. And that **all** folk should start taking things into their **own** control instead of letting things be done for them (or rather **against** them) and to learn to think for themselves for a change!

# GRATUITOUS NAUGHTY NAKED NUDY NUDE BOY CENTRE SPREAD



HUR-HUR-HUR!  
SOME NICE COMPUTER MAGAZINE GAVE AWAY THIS PROGRAMME ON HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN COMIC STRIPS. IT'S CLUNKY, VERY OUTDATED, VERY SLOW, BUT IT CAME WITH SOME GREAT CLIP ART. SO WHAT ELSE COULD I DO BUT START DRAWING STONKERS ON ALL THE MEN, AND LET'S FACE IT - THIS IS PROBABLY THE CLOSEST I'M EVER GOING TO GET TO ANY GAY COMPUTER PORN. INFACIT, DOES ANYONE KNOW IF THERE IS SUCH A THING AS GENUINE GAY 'PUTER PORN? OR IS IT - AS I RATHER SUSPECT, ALL STRAIGHT STUFF FOR BAD TECHIES WHO CAN'T GET GIRLFRIENDS?



Incidentally, Amiga owners are there any other so get in touch with me!

Evening meal at CAPTION

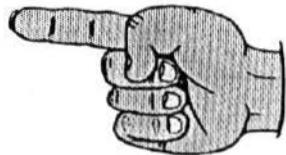


GROC's done Lee Kennedy described Sims as "criminally young" (giggle) they were on a sex panel  
2 ZINE!?



The above strip was sent to me as part of a very nice letter from the **scarily prolific Jeremy Dennis** (-she's a woman by the way) who does her own extensive Comix and Zines and also with **Damian Cugley** she co-produces **QZ**, a newsletter listing a

lot of the current British (and some USA) Queer and Grrrl Zines and Comix going. If you do your own Zine send it to them for inclusion.



For your own copy of QZ just send a Stamped SAE to

**Alleged Literature at  
225b Banbury Road,  
Oxford, OX2 7HN**

and while you're at it ask about all the other cool stuff they do such as; Lickity-Split, and Jeremy's 3-In-a-bed comic and Damian's Furry-Furry etc. etc.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**CAPTION '95**

**The Annual Oxford Alternative Comix Convention.**  
The next one takes place on the **Saturday 22nd July** at the **Oxford Union Society, St Michael's Street.**

Opening at 10am.

Advance membership is £8, unwaged £4, membership at the door on the day will be £10 with no discounts.

For further details and membership applications;

**CAPTION '95**

**25 Hart Street,  
Oxford. OX2 6BN**

and who knows if you're really (un)lucky you might even see me there -on a panel no less.





ANAL HELGA  
(continued)



# Helga Merchandise

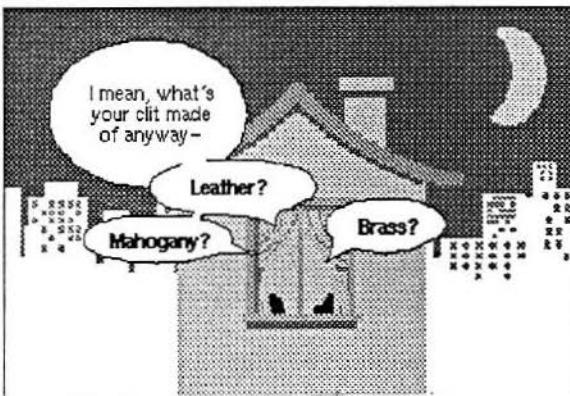
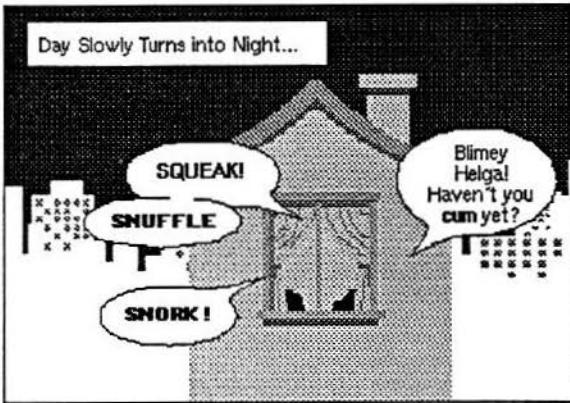
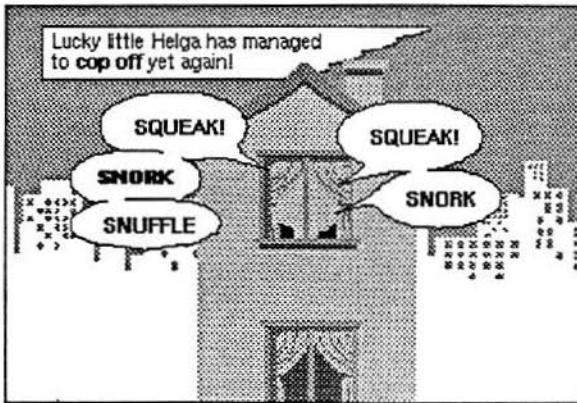
## ELECTRIC HELGA RIDE

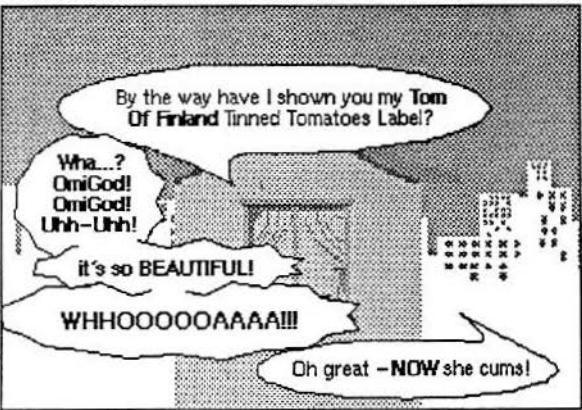
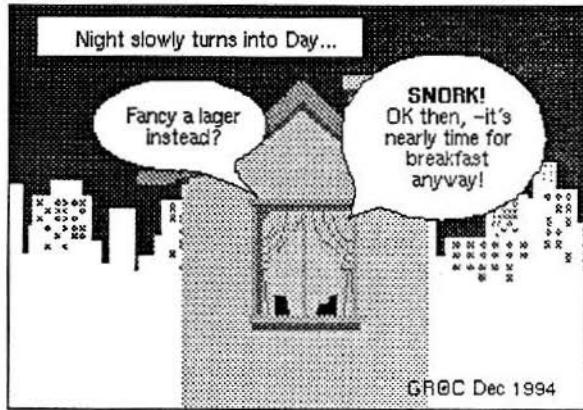
Your kids will love this exciting ride.  
It's just like the real thing!  
Just as cheap  
-Only this won't throw up all over you.



## TALKING HELGA DOORMAT

Come home to a real welcome  
with this charming novelty item.  
It's just like the real thing.





# Zine Plug

Time to plug a few more Zines then, first plug must go to **REB** who's been doing the startlingly good **FANoRAMA** for years now, it's most definitely **THE BEST**, it even knocks spots off any commercial porn available - as he tries to use photos of real people instead of just ripping off pics from old porn mags like most other Zinesters do, and he gives your head something to think about long after it's given your wrist a good work out. It's all so endearingly personal too, just like getting a letter from an old friend. I've fallen deeply in love with him, coz he's cute too. He's cheekily suggested I send him pix of my very own *nakkid bod* to him for the next issue. Ha-ha-ha, he'll be lucky, I don't do my '**Low Self-Esteem Corner**' cartoons for nothing. Besides I wouldn't like to be responsible for the mass out break of nausea that would cause!

Send \$5 & say \$2 extra for P+P to:  
**Fanorama, Suite 241, 500 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI 02914, USA** and do it NOW!

**Shaved Anus:** (be sensible, don't write this on the envelope) issues one, two and probably a third by now, 50p each & an A5 SSAE from **Paul, 26 Belgrave Street, Brighton, BN2 2NS**

I gotta mention Paul's 'Shaved Anus' apparently this wonderful little Zine has been giving a few folk apoplectic fits simply because apart from the cover - it has **NO** pictures in it, it's all text only, so if you can't be bothered to read then maybe you should steer clear, but then you'd be missing out on one of the great Zines this year, it's essential if you want some inside dirt on the main-stream music press, and if Cottaging is your thang (it ain't mine, I have to say but I still loved reading what Paul had to say about it) then try this on for size.



### **Bloody stinking Heterosexuals.**

Arrogant little snots that they are, they think that the whole world has been designed exclusively for them. Isn't that what most Religions tell them? Most religions that have a creator god that is. Can't you just see it in the way they rape and torture this world? Ploughing up rainforests, pouring toxic chemicals into the rivers and seas and forever fucking and fucking and fucking; producing hideous seas of hungry sprawling ugly flesh, needing ever more food, more clothes, more space, more energy, more cars, more consumer goods, all ultimately leading to the death of myriads of other living creatures to feed this insatiable uncontrollable appetite. In the western world so many people are on diets because there is so much around them that they can't help but over-indulge. But the whole human race needs to be put on a diet. To have its appetite reigned back in. And yet they still go on, blindly doing all the things they shouldn't. Because so many of them are taught to believe in an afterlife. It doesn't really matter what happens here because there's a heaven to go to straight afterward, where they can go on doing pretty much what they've been doing on earth, with no consequences to pay for.

**That's why it's heaven!**

**BUT NOT FOR US!**

...WHAT? SO YOU WERE **DIDDLING** AWAY ALL NIGHT LONG 'TIL THE SUN CAME UP AND ALL YOU GOT OUT OF IT WAS 'A LITTLE RIPPLE?'

-A RIPPLE IS OFTEN ALL I HAVE!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THESE **MULTIPLE ORGASMS** ALL 'COSMO'-READING WIMMIN ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE?

OH, THEY'RE RARE!  
-INFACt I'VE FRIENDS WHO HAVEN'T EVEN EVER HAD A RIPPLE!

THAT'S **TERRIBLE!**  
WHAT'S THE POINT OF HAVING SEX IF YOU DON'T HAVE PROPER FULL-BLOWN ORGASMS?

OH, IT'S **DIFFERENT** FOR GIRLIES!

**WHAT?**  
WELL - IT'S ALL SO MUCH LESS... **MECHANICAL!**

**GUZZLE!**  
**GUZZLE!**

UGH!-YEAH-BABY!  
YEAH-UGH  
I-AM-CUMMING!  
PUMP THAT JUICE  
YEAH-YEAH-UGH!  
YEAH!-OH BABY!  
BABY-UGH!  
JUICE ME...

YEAH! UFF-UFF!  
YEAH! GREASE MY  
FAT LOVE PISTON  
YEAH-BABY-YEAH!  
MAKE SPARKS!  
UFF-UFF-UFF!

BZZZ!  
WHIRR!

**CRANK!**  
**CRANK!**  
**CRANK!**

## COMPUTER PORN: the PANIC gets whipped up.

Over July 1994 in a quiet month for news we had a near flood of news items about a report on the spread of Computer Porn in schools.

It started quietly enough on '**The Net**' BBC2's computer programme, a good sensible report with a better grasp of reality and of the facts than the following news programmes were to display.

It was only two hours later that we had a sensationalist and quite ignorant report on ITV's News at Ten babbling on about how school children up and down the country are getting hold of hard core pornography via modems and via floppy discs passing from kid to kid in the playgrounds.

The following day the BBC had picked up on the same story prompted by the publication of a report by **Vicki Merchant** of the University of Central Lancashire. Both ITV and BBC hauled in their respective tame computer experts to demonstrate just how easy it was to get hold of mucky pornographic pictures via modem. "It's as easy as dialling a telephone number" quoth one expert. Er, no it bloody isn't actually.

It might well be if you are a computer expert sat at an enviably expensive powerful computer with a big hard disk with masses of RAM with a modem attached and being paid by the media for your time and trouble. But it's not really the sort of thing very many school children are going to have at home in their bed-

rooms. Only the very richest middle class kids.

The media gives the impression that **any** kid with even the humblest computer (even a ZX Spectrum or a Nintendo) has access to the hardest of hard core porn. Totally ignoring the reality involved. To begin with the kid has to have parents rich enough for them to have bought them a computer in the first place, and it would have to be a a big expensive computer with a lot of additional RAM and a decently sized hard disk. More the kind of equipment you'll find in a office for a small business than in a kid's bedroom for them to play games or do their homework on. Then they'll need a modem and a phone line in their own room and parents so blase that they don't care anything about their child running up staggeringly huge phone bills. Oh, and the child will have to have their own credit card because most of these Bulletin Boards where they just might find porn will be subscription only. On top of all this the kid will have to be clever enough to be able to get to grips with the software in the first place (and it ain't easy!) and if such is the case we should be thinking about giving him a degree and finding him a job in research and development somewhere instead of confiscating his equipment and burning his floppies. (Oo-er Missus!)

But all of this is conveniently ignored in the scrabble for sensationalist copy. Since it links two things which the public are currently scared of, porn (sex) and the spread

of new technology, the media is happy as ever not to let the facts get in the way of a good story.

Of course no one is bothering to question further whether pornography is harmful or not. It's just being taken for read that it is.

[And it's thanks to the solitary and highly portable, (even secretive) nature of computers that kids can hide their porn on disks. A dirty magazine is a lot harder to hide than the information on a floppy disk after all, and once the nosy parent has found the offending item it isn't so readily apparent what it is!]

In the age before the personal computers when we were school kids we often came across porn, kids would find their Dad's stash and bring in some of it into school. (I myself even found some choice stuff in a hedge row as a kid whilst on a walk obviously thrown there by some driver or lorry driver.) So this isn't a new problem by any means. And I would love just how many of these panicking modern day parents have seen pornography as school children. A lot of them I bet. But how many of them will admit to being depraved and corrupt as a result?

Anyone who might have read my ramble in the last issue of *Ginger* is already going to know my position on the so-called corruption of children or the protection of the innocent. Of course children are going to have a taste for pornography, why should this be surprising? Or shocking? Adolescents are at the age where their hormones are kicking up an almighty fuss and

puberty is happening. They are bound to start having an interest in sex, and if we could be honest for a change, we'd have to admit that what passes for sex education in this country is both too little and too late, if it's there at all. And I can tell you now that an obsession and interest with all matters sexual is going to last a lot longer than the hour or so given to it in sex education classes. You'll have to wait until you've passed through the menopause for it to ebb, and it might not even then!

Anybody beginning to suspect that once again a proclaimed fear for our children's innocence is being used as an excuse for something altogether more sinister?

I do. What all Governments hate are people having (relatively) free access to information, especially when it's information that shows up just what naughty things they've been up to. Governments have long had powers to tap phone lines, open mail, etc. Information technology is new ground for them and the Net spanning the world really frightens them. Of course they want their own handle on it.

In addition big commercial software companies hate the idea that people are getting freeware and cheap shareware (which is sometimes a lot better than the over-priced, bug-ridden, clumsy stuff they churn out!), and it irks entertainment companies that they aren't getting a rake off from a growing fad. It isn't hard to surmise that there is an informal conspiracy afoot between all of them to get the whole

lot shut down.

We may already be past the golden age of the Net. Don't be too surprised if all the Bulletin Boards get shut down very shortly with Government proclamations of having to do so in order to protect the Nation's youth from the spread of dangerous pornography.

Then don't be surprised when not so long after a greatly reduced but far more expensive version of the net reopens with something like the SKY satellite TV or BT or Microsoft logo all over it, with a certain Mr. Murdoch or another media mogul getting a massive rake off from it.

The Net is a genuinely democratic system (forgetting for one moment that you need to be rich enough to own a computer and modem and be able to pay big phone bills and subscription fees in the first place). What Government is going to like that?! After all Democracy is such a dangerous concept to those in control that us public are limited to only being allowed to put a pencilled cross on a slip of paper once

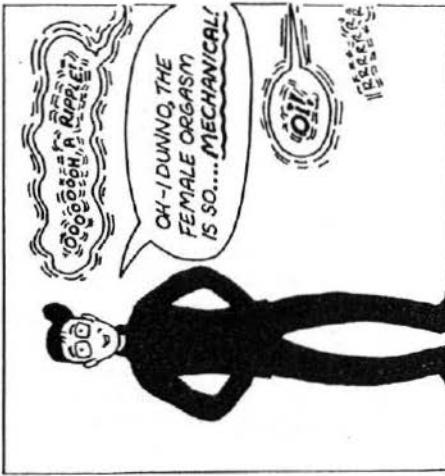
every four or five years. After that we have to endure four or five years of virtual dictatorship, until it's our time to put crosses on paper again. Only money and riots actually seem to ever be listened to by those in power. Never expensive reports by experts, never lobbyists, even common sense never gets a look in.

I also have a sneaking suspicion that a certain Ms Vicki Merchant is in the game of making a name for herself, could we be seeing the birth of a new Nineties Mary Whitehouse? Or more appropriately, of a new Fredric Wertham M.D.? (A self-appointed guardian of 1950's American youth. He attributed the then rise in juvenile delinquency and youth crime to them having all read horror comics -something which has direct parallels to the 'Video Nasty' hysteria of the Eighties and which we are still suffering the after effects of to this very day. Witness the furore over the Jamie Bulger case!)

Watch this space.

**WHOA! Yeah baby!  
EAT ME! EAT ME!**





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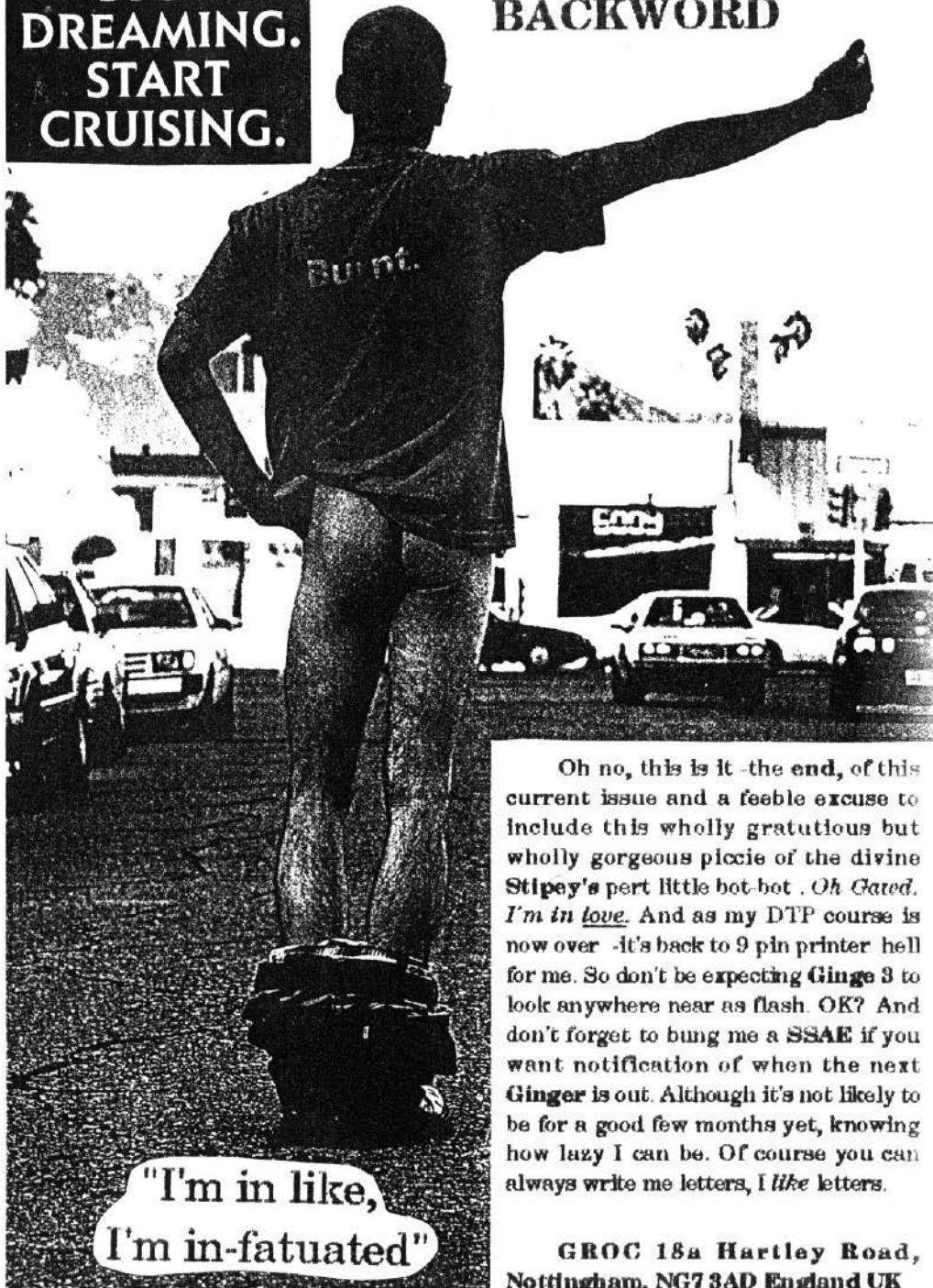


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STOP  
DREAMING.  
START  
CRUISING.

BACKWORD



"I'm in like,  
I'm in-fatuuated"

Oh no, this is it - the end, of this current issue and a feeble excuse to include this wholly gratuitous but wholly gorgeous piccie of the divine Stipey's pert little bot-bot. Oh Gated. I'm in love. And as my DTP course is now over - it's back to 9 pin printer hell for me. So don't be expecting **Ginge 3** to look anywhere near as flash. OK? And don't forget to bung me a **SSAE** if you want notification of when the next **Ginger** is out. Although it's not likely to be for a good few months yet, knowing how lazy I can be. Of course you can always write me letters, I *like* letters.

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*Helga's Handy Etiquette Hints  
to Love and Romance*



**GINGE 2**